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AUG 25 2008

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of
Dettwiler
Application No. 10/511,615
Filed: July 21, 2005
Attorney Docket No. 93134

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ON PETITION

This is a decision on petition, filed July 21, 2008, requesting revival of the above-identified application.

The petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) is **DISMISSED**.

Any reconsideration petition must be submitted within TWO (2) MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a)." This is **not** final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 704.

This application became abandoned on December 5, 2007 for failure to reply to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (Notice), mailed December 4, 2007, which set an extendable one (1) month period for reply. A Notice of Abandonment was mailed on June 24, 2008.

Petitioner asserts that the December 4, 2007 Notice was not received. Therefore, the delay in responding to it was unavoidable.

A grantable petition to revive an abandoned application under 37 CFR 1.137(a) must be accompanied by (1) the required reply, unless previously filed.; (2) the petition fee as set forth in § 1.17(l); (3) a showing to the satisfaction of the Director that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to this paragraph was unavoidable; and (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in § 1.20 (d)) required pursuant to paragraph (c) of this section.

This petition does not satisfy requirement (3).

With respect to (3), the showing of record is inadequate to establish unavoidable delay within the meaning of 37 CFR 1.137(a). Specifically, an application is "unavoidably" abandoned only where petitioner, or counsel for petitioner, takes all action necessary for a proper response to the outstanding Office action, but through the intervention of unforeseen circumstances, such as failure of mail, telegraph, telefacsimile, or the negligence of otherwise reliable employees, the response is not timely received in the Office. Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31 (Comm'r Pat. 1887).

The Director may revive an abandoned application if the delay in responding to the relevant outstanding Office requirement is shown to the satisfaction of the Director to have been "unavoidable". 35 U.S.C. § 133. Decisions on reviving abandoned applications have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable. Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31, 32-33 (Comm'r Pat. 1887) (the term 'unavoidable' "is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business"); In re Mattullath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (D.C. Cir. 1912); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 139, 141 (Comm'r Pat. 1913). In addition, decisions on revival are made on a "case-by-case basis, taking all the facts and circumstances into account." Smith v. Mossinghoff, 671 F.2d 533, 538, 213 USPQ 977, 982 (D.C. Cir. 1982). Finally, a petition to revive an application as unavoidably abandoned cannot be granted where a petitioner has failed to meet his or her burden of establishing the cause of the unavoidable delay. Haines v. Quigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 5 USPQ2d 1130 (N.D. Ind. 1987).

The showing required to establish non-receipt of an Office communication must include:

1. A statement from the practitioner stating that the Office communication was not received by the practitioner and attesting to the fact that a search of the file jacket and docket records indicates that the Office communication was not received.
2. A copy of the docket record where the non-received Office communication would have been entered had it been received and docketed must be attached to and referenced in practitioner's statement.¹

A review of the record indicates no irregularity in the mailing of the December 4, 2007 Notice, and in the absence of any irregularity there is a strong presumption that the communication was properly mailed to the applicant at the correspondence address of record. This presumption may be overcome by a showing that the aforementioned communication was not in fact received.

The showing in the instant petition is not sufficient to withdraw the holding of abandonment because (1) practitioner did not include a statement that a thorough and fruitless search of the file jacket was conducted and (2) practitioner did not include a copy of the docket record where the non-received Office communication would have been entered had it been received and docketed.

Regarding fees: Petitioner was charged a \$770.00 petition fee, which is the small entity fee associated with filing a petition to revive under 37 CFR 1.137(b). As this petition was filed under

¹ See notice entitled "Withdrawing the Holding of Abandonment When Office Actions Are Not Received," 1156 O.G. 53 (November 16, 1993).

37 CFR 1.137(a), petitioner should have been charged \$255.00, the small entity fee associated with filing a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a). Deposit account no. 23-0920 will be credited the \$515.00 balance due petitioner.

ALTERNATIVE VENUE

If petitioner is unable to provide documentary evidence that the December 4, 2007 Notice was not received, petitioner should strongly consider filing a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b).

Public Law 97-247, § 3, 96 Stat. 317 (1982), which revised patent and trademark fees, amended 35 U.S.C. § 41(a)(7) to provide for the revival of an “unintentionally” abandoned application without a showing that the delay in prosecution or in late payment of an issue fee was “unavoidable.” This amendment to 35 U.S.C. § 41(a)(7) has been implemented in 37 CFR 1.137(b).

A grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) must be accompanied by (1) the required reply, unless previously filed; (2) the petition fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(m) (\$770.00); (3) a statement that the **entire** delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(b) was unintentional. The Director may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional; and (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(d).

The filing of a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) cannot be intentionally delayed and therefore must be filed promptly. A person seeking revival due to unintentional delay can not make a statement that the delay was unintentional unless the entire delay, including the delay from the date it was discovered that the application was abandoned until the filing of the petition to revive under 37 CFR 1.137(b), was unintentional. A statement that the delay was unintentional is not appropriate if petitioner intentionally delayed the filing of a petition for revival under 37 CFR 1.137(b).

A revival petition fee must be submitted with a revival petition, as the fee is a statutory requirement.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Mail Stop PETITION
Commissioner for Patents
Post Office Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By hand: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Customer Service Window, Mail Stop Petition
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

By FAX: (571) 273-8300 – ATTN: Office of Petitions

Telephone inquiries concerning this decision should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3230.



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